

'Safer at home' order extended

At the same time, the state is working on plans to reopen the economy

By Barbara Hoberock
Tulsa World

OKLAHOMA CITY — Gov. Kevin Stitt is working on plans to reopen the state's economy, including nonessential busi-



Stitt

nesses and restaurants, he said Wednesday. "Let me be clear," the governor said during a Capitol news conference. "We are not out of the woods yet."

Residents need to continue with distancing themselves

from others, washing hands frequently, and limiting trips to the grocery store and pharmacy.

"Because we are 'flattening our curve,' we are working on plans to reopen our state," Stitt said.

He said decisions would be based on data and advice from medical experts.

Stitt extended his "safer

at home" executive order for vulnerable populations, such as those age 65 and older and those who have underlying medical conditions, to May 6 from April 30.

He said elective surgeries could resume April 24 because in part the state is well-equipped with hospital beds

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Death reported in vet center

It is one of 36 reported in long-term care and nursing homes in state

By Andrea Eger
Tulsa World

The death of a patient whose COVID-19 diagnosis was the first in a state-run nursing home for veterans is among 36 deaths now being reported in long-term care and nursing homes across Oklahoma.

The death was reported at the Oklahoma Veterans Center-Claremore by the Oklahoma State Department of Health.

Hotspots in northeastern Oklahoma have been revealed in facilities in Bartlesville, Broken Arrow, Coweta, Grove and Skiatook.

As for the fatal case associated with the Claremore veterans center by state health officials, the Oklahoma Department of Veterans Affairs would acknowledge only that there had been a positive test at that site, and not a COVID-19-related death.

"Pursuant to pro-active screening measures, this veteran was under isolation precautions in the facility's designated isolation area prior to receiving

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BRIDGING GAPS • Tulsa Kitchens Unite keeps local families fed, restaurant workers paid



Brothers Neymar Serrano (left), 8, and Wilber Alvarado, 12, walk home after getting food from Tulsa Kitchens Unite at Lindbergh Elementary School on Wednesday. Hunger Free Oklahoma partners and food preparers are making free meals for local families. MIKE SIMONS/Tulsa World

'The next meal'

By Kelsy Schlotthauer
Tulsa World

Chris Bernard has done countless interviews about food insecurity across the state during his time as executive director of Hunger Free Oklahoma, but it wasn't until recently that he's been more liable to cry.

"It's been a lot," Bernard said of launching Tulsa Kitchens Unite, a program meant to bridge meal gaps for Tulsa families while providing income to local restaurants during the COVID-19 pandemic. "But it's been really fun and really cool to see all of these people who want to help."

Bernard spent Wednesday morning driving a cargo van full of boxes of pre-chilled, adult-sized meals between Tulsa Public Schools sites. And although he and others in his organization have spent many long days and



Volunteers Cheney Hinrichs and Laura Mantooth prepare to hand out food from Tulsa Kitchens Unite at Lindbergh Elementary School on Wednesday. MIKE SIMONS/Tulsa World

late nights planning and organizing the effort, it's the others who have stepped up to the plate that have blown him away.

The cargo van? It was loaned by a local catering company. The to-go boxes? Made possible by a partnership with the food bank and a leveraging of their

contract with a food supplier. The meals were prepared by employees of 10 local restaurant partners across Tulsa, with some of them even chilled in a hotel kitchen that offered its space.

When one calls on Tulsans for help, they answer,

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Editor's note:
During stressful times, Fred Rogers of "Mister Rogers' Neighborhood" would share this message: Look for the helpers. We're finding them, and we'll be sharing their stories in this regular feature.

To help and get help

- Donate at bit.ly/Donate-ToTKU.
- Partner at HungerFreeOK.org/TulsaKitchensUnite
- Buy a T-shirt from Mythic Press to support local artists and TKU at tulsakitchensunite.itemorder.com/sale
- Find food at Meals4kidsok.org or HungerFreeOK.org/covid19

COVID-19 CONFIRMED CASES, DEATHS

The novel coronavirus has been declared a pandemic by the World Health Organization. Below are the number of confirmed cases as of 10 p.m. Wednesday.

TULSA COUNTY
Confirmed cases: 362
Deaths: 21

STATE OF OKLAHOMA
Confirmed cases: 2,263
Deaths: 123

UNITED STATES
Confirmed cases: 638,111
Deaths: 30,844

WORLDWIDE
Confirmed cases: 2,063,161
Deaths: 136,983

Sources: Oklahoma State Department of Health, Tulsa Health Department, Johns Hopkins

Donated plasma proving valuable

Antibody-rich plasma from recovered patients proves promising in treatment

By Corey Jones
Tulsa World

Curtis Barone checked his cellphone while seated in a lawn chair Tuesday afternoon in the backyard of his Tulsa home.

The 56-year-old was Oklahoma's first confirmed case of COVID-19 and was speaking with a Tulsa World reporter about how, a few days earlier, he also was the first to donate convalescent plasma in Tulsa. The incoming message was from a doctor asking if Barone could

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Trump looks to ease social distancing in some states

New guidelines would allow some states to ease up; CEOs urge caution

By Zeke Miller, Aamer Madhani, and Kevin Freking
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump is prepared to announce new guidelines allowing some states to quickly ease up on social distancing, he said Wednesday, even as business leaders told him they need more coronavirus testing and

personal protective equipment before people can safely go back to work.

The industry executives cautioned Trump that the return to normalcy will be anything but swift.

The new guidelines, expected to be announced Thursday, are aimed at clearing the way for an easing of restrictions in areas with low transmission of the coronavirus, while keeping them in place in harder-hit places. The ultimate decisions will remain with governors.

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President Donald Trump speaks about the coronavirus in the White House Rose Garden on Wednesday. ALEX BRANDON/AP

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